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C O N F I D E N T I A L MANAMA 000106

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [KPAL](#) [KDEM](#) [BA](#) [REGION](#) [OFFICIALS](#)

SUBJECT: FOREIGN MINISTER ON IRAQ, PALESTINIANS

Classified by Ambassador William T. Monroe for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

1. (C) In a January 21 meeting covering several subjects (septels), Foreign Minister Shaikh Khalid bin Ahmed Al Khalifa told the Ambassador that the Iraq election results were good because they encouraged all segments of society to participate in the political system. Iraq needs social peace and harmony, and political leaders need to agree on a formula to bring everyone together. Doing so would be the best defense against terrorism. Shaikh Khalid said that he spoke recently to Amr Moussa about the importance of scheduling the proposed meeting of Arab ministers in Baghdad, and Moussa thought March was a possibility. The Minister said that Iraq's Sunnis "and we" are worried about Iranian influence inside Iraq. Iran has "agents all over" the country and wants to control things in Iraq like it has done in Lebanon.

2. (C) Shaikh Khalid continued that Palestinian President Abbas needs more help, and could use a gesture from Israel that would provide a "glimmer of hope" for the future. Hamas is controlling the street, and Abbas is embattled. Though Israel demands that he fight Hamas, how can he do this if the Israelis do not allow him to properly arm and equip the police force? Hamas and other militants have more weapons than the Palestinian Authority. We all support him, Shaikh Khalid said, but Abbas is facing serious enemies.

MONROE